

CLAIMS

1 1. A computer implemented method of preparing a computer system for use, said
2 computer system including a screen display with a screen display area, said method
3 comprising the steps of:
4 accepting a particular application button press by a user, wherein said computer
5 system includes a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications,
6 wherein said plurality of application buttons include said particular
7 application button, wherein each application button of said plurality of
8 application buttons:
9 is associated with a particular application program, and
10 is located at a location external to said screen display area; and
11 in response to said particular application button press:
12 waking a processor, and
13 executing the particular application program associated with said particular
14 application button.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein
2 said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and
3 each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and
4 fixedly attached to said housing.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein each application button of said plurality of
2 application buttons is a mechanical button.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the steps further include:

2 receiving data that indicates a user selected state for the particular application
3 program; and
4 in response to said particular application button press, bringing the particular
5 application program associated with the particular application button into said
6 state.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of waking a processor in response to said
2 particular application button press includes interrupting said processor such that said
3 processor enters an interrupt service routine.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein said interrupt service routine tests a register to
2 determine which application button from said plurality of application buttons has been
3 pressed.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the steps further comprise executing a program that
2 reconfigures a new particular application program to be associated with a particular
3 application button of said plurality of application buttons.

1 8. The method of claim 1,
2 wherein the computer system is a mobile computer system; and
3 wherein the steps include:
4 determining whether said particular application button was pressed for a
5 period of time that exceeds a predetermined period of time, and
6 if said particular application button was depressed for a period of time that
7 exceeds the predetermined period of time, then said particular
8 application program transmitting a data record.

1 9. A computer apparatus, said computer apparatus comprising:
2 a screen display with a screen display area;
3 a processor, said processor having a low power consumption sleep mode, said
4 processor having a hardware interrupt line that awakes said processor from
5 said sleep mode;
6 a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications, wherein each application
7 button of said plurality of application buttons:
8 is associated with a particular application program,
9 is located at a location external to said screen display area, and
10 asserts said hardware interrupt line when said each application button is
11 pressed; and
12 interrupt service code for handling processor interrupts caused by said hardware
13 interrupt line being asserted by pressing a particular application button of said
14 plurality of application buttons, said interrupt service code causing execution
15 of the particular application program associated with said particular
16 application button.

1 10. The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein
2 said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and
3 each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and
4 fixedly attached to said housing.

1 11. The computer apparatus of claim 10, wherein each application button of said plurality
2 of application buttons is a mechanical button.

1 12. The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein

2 said computer apparatus is configured for receiving data that indicates a user selected
3 state for said particular application program associated with said particular
4 application button; and
5 said interrupt service code causing said execution of the particular application
6 program causes bringing said particular application program associated with
7 said particular application button into said state.

1 13. The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein said interrupt service code tests a register
2 to determine which application button from said plurality of application buttons has been
3 pressed.

1 14. The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein said computer apparatus is configured
2 for executing a program that associates another application program with said particular
3 application button of said plurality of application buttons.

1 15. The computer apparatus of claim 9,
2 wherein the computer apparatus is a mobile computer system;
3 wherein the computer apparatus is configured for determining whether said particular
4 application button was pressed for a period of time that exceeds a
5 predetermined period of time; and
6 if said particular application button was pressed for a period of time that exceeds the
7 predetermined period of time, then said interrupt service code causing said
8 execution of the particular application program causes said particular
9 application program to transmit a data record.

1 16. A software product carrying code for preparing a computer system for use,
2 wherein execution of the code by one or more processors causes the one or more
3 processors to perform the steps of:
4
5 accepting a particular application button press by a user, wherein said computer
6 system includes a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications,
7 wherein said plurality of application buttons include said particular
8 application button, wherein each application button of said plurality of
9 application buttons:
10 is associated with a particular application program, and
11 is located at a location external to said screen display area; and
12 in response to said particular application button press:
13 waking a processor, and
14 executing the particular application program associated with said particular
15 application button.

1 17. The software product of claim 18, wherein
2 said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and
3 each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and
4 fixedly attached to said housing.

1 18. The software product of claim 17, wherein each application button of said plurality of
2 application buttons is a mechanical button.

1 19. The software product of claim 16, wherein the steps further include:
2 receiving data that indicates a user selected state for the particular application
3 program; and

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